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January 28, 2000

BOX PATENT APPLICATION
Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Re: Application of **Patrick BRINDEL, Bruno DANY, and Emmanuel DESURVIRE**

WDM REGENERATED TRANSMISSION SYSTEM
Our Ref. Q57709

Dear Sir:

Attached hereto is the application identified above including 10 sheets of the specification, claims and abstract, 2 sheets of formal drawings, executed Assignment and PTO 1595 form, and executed Declaration and Power of Attorney. Also enclosed is the Information Disclosure Statement.

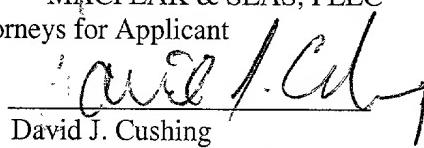
The Government filing fee is calculated as follows:

Total claims	14	-	20	=	0	x	\$18.00	=	\$0.00
Independent claims	1	-	3	=	0	x	\$78.00	=	\$0.00
Base Fee									\$690.00

TOTAL FILING FEE	\$690.00
Recordation of Assignment	\$40.00
TOTAL FEE	\$730.00

Checks for the statutory filing fee of \$690.00 and Assignment recordation fee of \$40.00 are attached. You are also directed and authorized to charge or credit any difference or overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 and any petitions for extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 which may be required during the entire pendency of the application to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. A duplicate copy of this transmittal letter is attached.

Priority is claimed from February 19, 1999 based on French Application No. 9902126. The priority document is enclosed herewith.

Respectfully submitted,
SUGHRUE, MION, ZINN,
MACPEAK & SEAS, PLLC
Attorneys for Applicant
By: 
David J. Cushing
Registration No. 28,703

WDM REGENERATED TRANSMISSION SYSTEMBACKGROUND OF THE INVENTIONField of the invention

The present invention concerns wavelength-division multiplex fiber optic
5 transmission systems and more particularly the regeneration of signals therein.

Description of the prior art

It is well known that to transmit optical signals over very long distances, as
in the case of transoceanic transmission by submarine cable, it is necessary to
amplify the optical signals periodically to compensate the attenuation of the signal
10 and to reshape the signals to compensate distortion induced by the transmission
medium or by interaction between the various signals of the multiplex. The distortion
is compensated by "3R" regenerators ("3R" signifying "reshaping", "retiming" and
"reamplifying") whose functions include reshaping the pulses, retiming the pulses
and compensating pulse intensity losses in the regenerator.

15 Wavelength-division multiplexed (WDM) transmission systems are tending
to include more and more channels (or wavelengths) on each optical fiber. The bit
rate per channel is also increasing. Thus the most recent transoceanic transmission
systems have a capacity of 32 channels each of 10 Gbit/s.

There are various ways to regenerate the signals of each channel in such
20 systems. One solution is to demultiplex the signals and to regenerate each signal
individually. However, this solution has the disadvantage of requiring as many
regenerators as there are multiplexed signals which, given the trend for the number
of channels to increase, leads to a complex and physically large regenerator, also
requiring a powerful electrical power supply, which represent heavy penalties in the
25 case of transmission via submarine cable.

Another solution which can be used in the case of soliton WDM signals (or
RZ signals converted into solitons at the regenerator input) consists in using a
regenerator including means for compensating chromatic dispersion in order to
resynchronize the various channels followed by a synchronous modulator. This
30 solution has the disadvantage of requiring very accurate control of chromatic
dispersion so that the signals are perfectly synchronized at the input of the
synchronous modulator. Controlling the chromatic dispersion is all the more difficult
in that it must be achieved for a large number of channels.

It has also been proposed, in the case of WDM soliton signals, to dispose
35 the regenerators along the optical line at locations where a certain number of

channels are naturally synchronous, and to regenerate only these channels at each of these locations (see WO-A-98 35459). However, this technique introduces a constraint on the position of the regenerators which can sometimes be problematical, depending on the number of channels and their wavelength spacing.

5 The invention proposes a simple solution to the problem of regenerating channels in a WDM transmission system, and one which remains simple even if the number of channels is high.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

To be more precise, the invention proposes a multichannel wavelength-
10 division multiplex fiber optic transmission system including an optical transmitter and an optical receiver connected by an optical line including at least one optical fiber and at least one set of channel regenerators, wherein successive regenerators regenerate respective groups of channels forming a subset of the set of channels.

15 The number of groups is preferably a submultiple of the total number of regenerators.

The groups of channels preferably include a small number of channels, in particular a single channel or two channels.

20 This greatly simplifies the structure of the regenerator, compared to the solutions which demultiplex all the signals or compensate chromatic dispersion of all the signals with respect to each other.

Each regenerator advantageously includes an optical regenerator unit.

If a plurality of channels are regenerated in the same regenerator, each regenerator can include means for synchronizing the channels to be regenerated and an optical regenerator unit, in particular a synchronous modulator.

25 In a first preferred embodiment of the invention each regenerator includes a demultiplexer and a multiplexer in order to process independently channels which are to be regenerated and channels which are not to be regenerated.

30 In a second preferred embodiment of the invention each regenerator includes an inserter/extractor system for isolating the channels which are to be regenerated.

A system in accordance with the invention can additionally include a compensator amplifier for compensating intensity differences between regenerated channels and non-regenerated channels.

35 The transmission system advantageously includes supervisory means using a dedicated channel. In a transmission system of the above kind, each

regenerator can include means for separating the dedicated channel from the other channels, a supervisory unit for modifying the signal of the dedicated channel as a function of information relating to the status of the regenerator, and means for remultiplexing the dedicated channel with the other channels.

5 In particular, each regenerator can include a regenerator unit for regenerating the channels of a group of channels, the supervisory unit receiving information from said regenerator unit and also receiving a fraction of the regenerated signal delivered by said regenerator unit.

10 The system of the invention preferably includes a plurality of spaced optical amplifiers and spaced optical regenerators and the spacing of the optical regenerators is preferably a multiple of the spacing of the optical amplifiers.

15 The features and advantages of the invention will emerge more clearly from the following description which is given with reference to the accompanying drawings and by way of illustrative and non-limiting example only.

15 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 shows the general structure of a prior art optical transmission system including regenerators.

20 Figure 2 shows one embodiment of a regenerator in accordance with the invention.

25 Figure 3 shows a variant of the regenerator shown in figure 2 which is adapted to regenerate two channels.

Figure 4 shows another embodiment of a regenerator in accordance with the invention which is adapted to regenerate a single channel.

Figure 5 shows a variant of the regenerator shown in figure 4 which is adapted to regenerate two channels.

30 Figure 6 shows an optical transmission system in accordance with the invention equipped with optical supervisory means.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Figure 1 shows a conventional optical transmission system. It includes two terminal stations, namely a transmitter 2 and a receiver 4, connected by a fiber optic link 6. Amplifiers 8 are provided at regular intervals along the optical fiber to re-amplify the signals and so compensate losses due to absorption by the optical fiber. The distance Z_a between two successive amplifiers depends on many parameters (signal intensity, absorption by the optical fiber, wavelength separation between the signals, etc.); it is typically from 50 km to 100 km. The transmission system further

includes optical regenerators 10. The distance Z_r between two successive regenerators also depends on many parameters (Kerr effect, Gordon-Haus jitter, four-wave interaction, etc.) which affect the shape of the pulses and induce an offset of the pulses relative to their nominal bit time. The regenerators are generally disposed at a distance Z_a relative to an amplifier 10 and include an amplifier similar to the amplifiers 8. The distance Z_r between two regenerators is equal to $k \cdot Z_a$, where k is an integer generally from 5 to 10 and depending in particular on the bit rate of the signals of the multiplex.

The invention differs from prior art transmission systems in that each regenerator regenerates a small number of channels. For example, for a WDM system with n wavelengths $\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \dots, \lambda_n$ (n being equal to 32, for example), each regenerator could be designed to regenerate only one wavelength. In other words, the n channels could be divided into n groups G_1, G_2, \dots, G_n each including only one channel. There would then be in succession along the line, with intervals Z_r between each regenerator and the next, a regenerator R_1 to regenerate the channel λ_1 , a regenerator R_2 for the channel λ_2 , ..., a regenerator R_n for the channel λ_n , another regenerator R_1 for the channel λ_1 , etc. The important advantage is the simplification of the system by virtue of the fact that each regenerator has a simple structure.

Instead of a single channel per group, a transmission system can be provided in which the n channels are divided into $n/2$ groups, each including two channels, and more generally a system in which the n channels are divided into p groups each including n/p channels.

Finally, the channels can be divided unequally between the groups, for example two channels in group G_1 , three channels in group G_2 , two channels in group G_3 , etc.

The description with reference to the subsequent figures shows that each regenerator has exactly the same structure. This simplifies the design of the system and the manufacture of the regenerators, which increases the reliability of the transmission system.

For example, for a transoceanic link of 32 channels at 10 Gbit/s and having a length in the order of 10 000 km, the distance Z_a between amplifiers is in the order of 40 km and the distance Z_r between regenerators is in the order of 320 km.

Figure 2 shows a first embodiment of a regenerator designed to regenerate only one channel. It has at the input a duplexer 12 for separating the channel λ_k to

be regenerated from the other channels λ_i ($1 \leq i \leq n; i \neq k$) and at the output a duplexer 14 for remultiplexing the channel λ_k with the other channels. The regenerator unit 16 can be of any type known in the art and advantageously includes a synchronous optical modulator in the case of soliton signals or RZ signals converted into solitons.

Generally, although optical regenerator units are currently preferred, the use of opto-electrical regenerator units, i.e. regenerator units in which the optical signals are converted into electrical signals, regenerated in electrical form and then converted back into optical signals, is not excluded from the scope of the present invention.

The regenerator units are powered by an electrical cable 18 (not shown in figure 1). A compensator amplifier 20 in the branch of the regenerator receiving the non-regenerated channels compensates the intensity difference between the non-regenerated channels and the channel λ_k . In some embodiments, there could instead be a compensator amplifier of this kind in the branch receiving the regenerator unit 16, should the latter induce an intensity loss in the channel λ_k .

When the regenerator 10 is at a distance Z_a from the preceding amplifier 8 (see figure 1), the regenerator 10 shown in figure 2 further includes an amplifier 8. This amplifier is preferably at the output of the regenerator 10, but could also be at its input. It could also replace the amplifier 20 shown in figure 2, in respect of the non-regenerated channels. In this case, the regenerator unit 16 would have also to include an amplifier at the output of the regenerator 10 to amplify the signals to be regenerated to the same intensity as non-regenerated signals. The latter arrangement is particularly beneficial because the number of signals that each amplifier must amplify is then smaller, as compared to the line amplifiers 8 (figure 1). Amplifiers of lower power or a greater power margin can then be used in the regenerators.

Figure 3 shows an embodiment similar to that shown in figure 2, but adapted to regenerate two channels λ_k and λ_{k+1} . The only difference compared to the regenerator shown in figure 2 is the provision of synchronization means 22 upstream of the regenerator unit 16 to synchronize the two channels to be regenerated. Synchronization means of this kind can simply be obtained, as shown here, with the aid of a three-port optical circulator 24 and a delay line 26 including two optical reflectors, for example Bragg filters 28, 30, spaced from each other so that the channels are resynchronized when they reach the regenerator unit 16. The

delay between the channels can be adjusted by means of a variable delay line 32.

Figure 4 shows a second embodiment of a regenerator designed to regenerate a single channel. It essentially includes an inserter/extractor system 33 which is a standard component in the field of optical transmission systems and a regenerator unit 16. The inserter/extractor system 33 includes a first three-port optical circulator 34, a section 36 of optical line provided with an optical reflector 38, for example a Bragg filter, to reflect the channel λ_k , and a second optical circulator 40. These components are arranged, in a manner well known in the art, to extract the channel λ_k from the optical line and to direct it to the input of the regenerator unit 16 and to insert the regenerated channel λ_k received from the regenerator unit 16 into the optical line.

It is important to note that the optical regenerator unit can be exactly the same for all the channels, for example in the case where the regenerator includes a synchronous modulator, with the result that the regenerator 10 can be adapted to any channel simply by choosing the wavelength to be reflected by the optical reflector 38. Thus the transmission system shown in figure 1 can be equipped with identical regenerators, which are "personalized" only in terms of the wavelength of the optical reflector 38, which simplifies manufacture, reduces costs and increases reliability.

The regenerator shown in figure 4 can be adapted, as shown in figure 5, to regenerate two channels λ_k and λ_{k+1} . This regenerator differs from that shown in figure 4 in that the line section 36 between the optical circulators 34 and 40 includes two optical reflectors for each channel. To be more precise, there are in succession on this line section: an optical reflector 42 for the channel λ_k , a variable delay line 44 and an optical reflector 46 for the channel λ_{k+1} , this combination forming resynchronization means similar to the resynchronization means 22 shown in figure 3, an optical reflector 48 for the channel λ_k and an optical reflector 50 for the channel λ_{k+1} .

The regenerator shown in figure 5 can be modified to regenerate more than two channels. Obviously, for this it is sufficient to add to the line section 36 optical reflectors adapted to reflect the channels to be regenerated and delay lines like the lines 44, if necessary.

Note that the compensator amplifier 20 of the regenerator shown in figure 2, intended to compensate an intensity difference between the channel or channels regenerated and non-regenerated channels, can be between the optical reflectors

46 and 48 in the case of the regenerator as shown in figure 5.

Over and above the structural simplicity of the transmission system in accordance with the invention, an additional advantage is the possibility of implementing a system element supervisory function in a simple manner. As is well known in the art, supervision consists in transmitting a signal over the line which is processed in each amplifier or regenerator to include therein information relating to the status, performance, etc. of the amplifiers and regenerators. This supervisory signal is on a specific channel in the bandwidth of the multiplex. The drawback of the prior art systems is that all the channels are regenerated simultaneously, which implies complex supervisory means in each regenerator (supervision of all WDM channels and associated synchronous modulators).

The transmission system in accordance with the invention has the advantage of enabling each regenerator to be supervised in a simpler manner.

Figure 6 shows a regenerator similar to that shown in figure 4, but with added supervisory means. The components identical to those in figure 4 carry the same reference numbers.

The supervisory means in the regenerator shown in figure 6 include: an optical reflector 52 for extracting and then inserting the supervisory channel λ_S , an optical coupler or demultiplexer 54 for separating the channels λ_K and λ_S extracted from the line by the circulator 34 and the reflectors 38, 52, an optical coupler or multiplexer 56 for remultiplexing the channels λ_K and λ_S after they have been processed, and a supervisory unit 58 for receiving information on the status of the regenerator 16 and on the status of the channel λ_K via an optical coupler 60 sampling a portion of the signal on the channel λ_K at the output of the regenerator unit 16, the supervisory unit 58 transmitting that information on the channel λ_S to the optical coupler or multiplexer 56.

Supervision is simpler than in the prior art because it takes account of only a small number of channels of the multiplex at each regenerator (only one channel in the case of figure 4).

The invention is not limited to the embodiments described but to the contrary encompasses all variants that are within the scope of the following claims.

THERE IS CLAIMED:

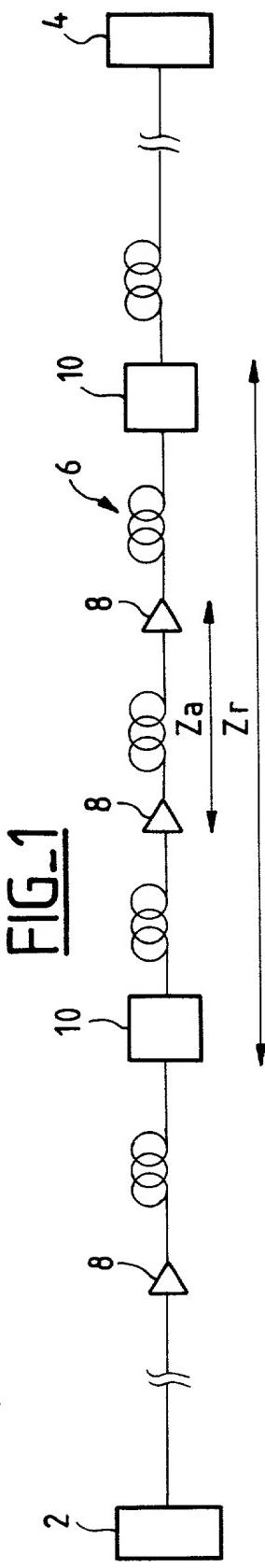
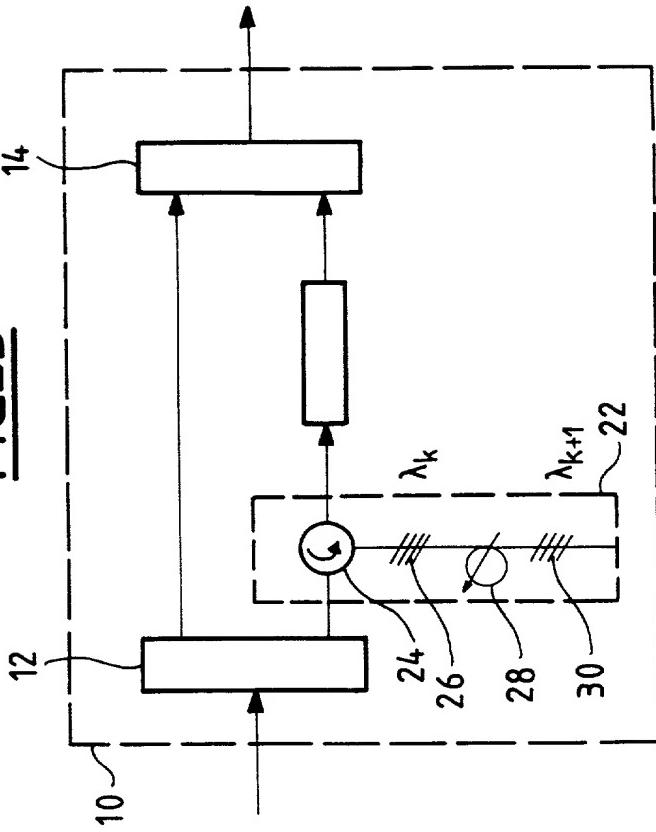
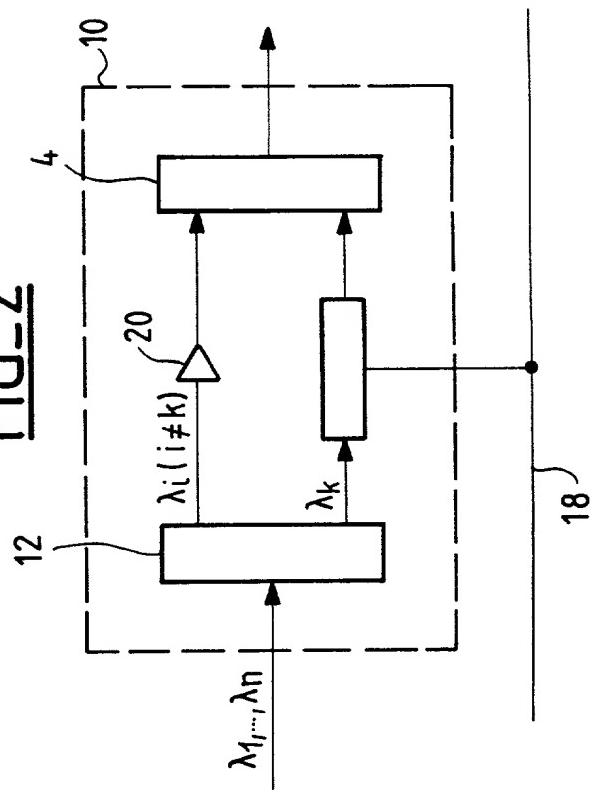
1. A multichannel wavelength-division multiplex fiber optic transmission system including an optical transmitter and an optical receiver connected by an optical line including at least one optical fiber and at least one set of channel regenerators, wherein successive regenerators regenerate respective groups of channels forming a subset of said set of channels.
2. The system claimed in claim 1 wherein the number of successive regenerators is a submultiple of the number of regenerators.
3. The system claimed in claim 1 wherein each group includes only one channel.
4. The system claimed in claim 3 wherein each regenerator is an optical regenerator.
5. The system claimed in claim 1 wherein at least one group includes two channels.
6. The system claimed in claim 4 wherein each regenerator for regenerating a plurality of channels includes means for synchronizing the channels to be regenerated and an optical regenerator unit.
7. The system claimed in claim 4 wherein each regenerator includes a synchronous modulator.
8. The system claimed in claim 1 wherein each regenerator includes a demultiplexer and a multiplexer to process independently channels which are to be regenerated and channels which are not to be regenerated.
9. The system claimed in claim 1 wherein each regenerator includes an inserter/extractor system for isolating channels to be regenerated.
10. The system claimed in claim 1 wherein each regenerator includes a compensator amplifier for compensating intensity differences between regenerated and non-regenerated channels.
11. A system as claimed in claim 1 further including supervisory means using a dedicated channel.
12. The system claimed in claim 11 wherein each regenerator includes means for separating said dedicated channel from the other channels, a supervisory unit for transmitting information relating to the status of said regenerator on said dedicated channel and means for remultiplexing said dedicated channel with the other channels.
13. The system claimed in claim 12 wherein each regenerator includes a regenerator unit for regenerating the channels of a group of channels and the

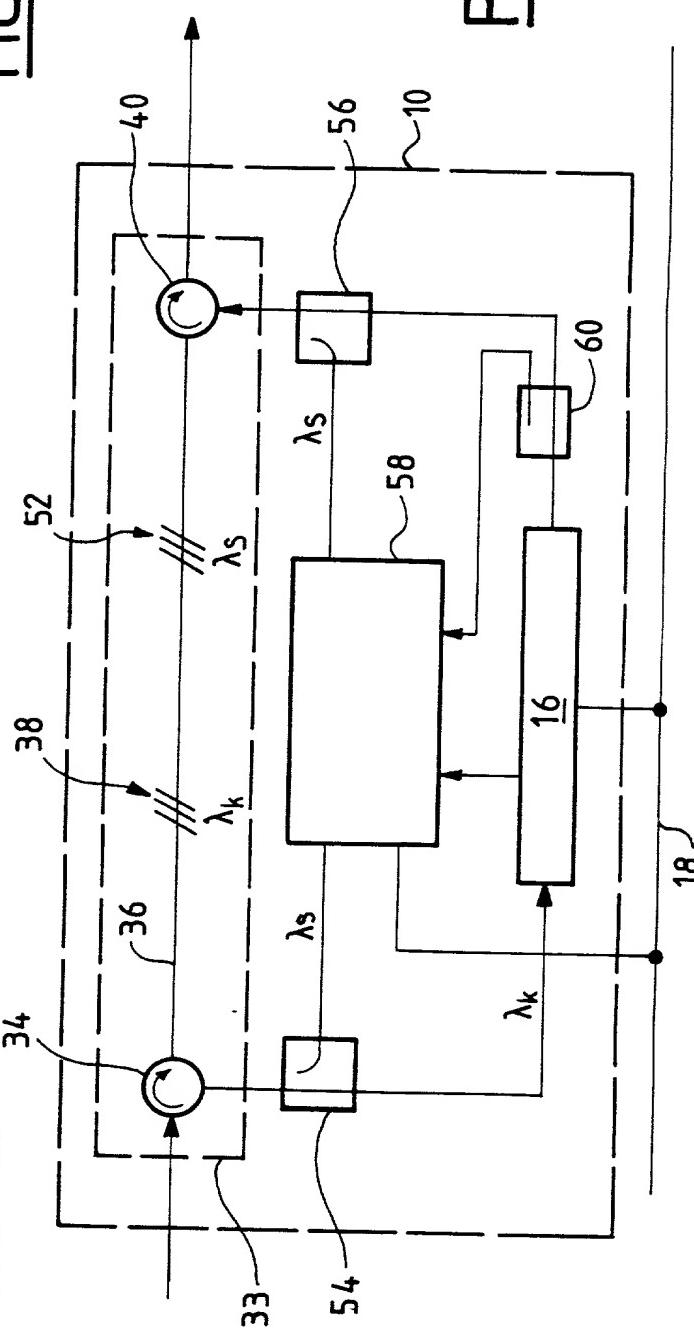
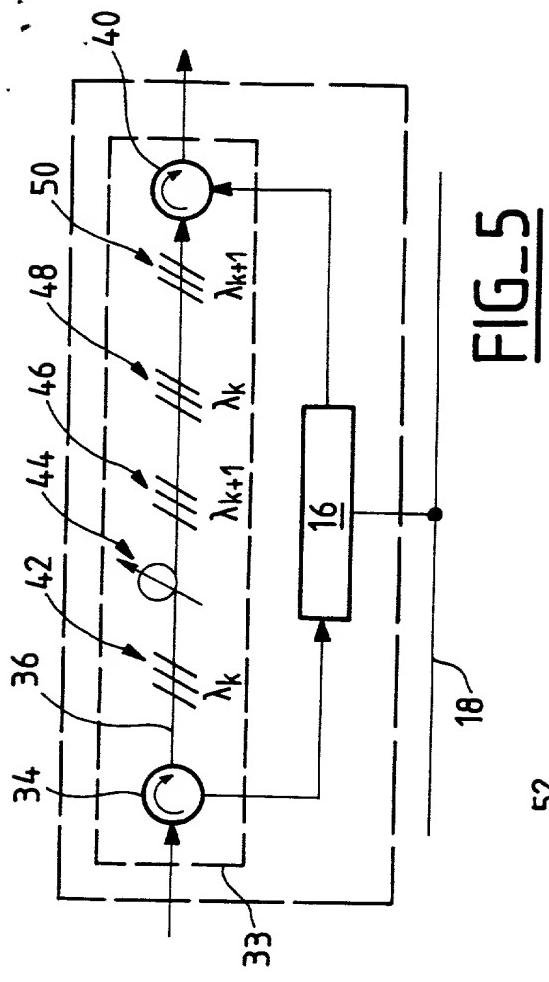
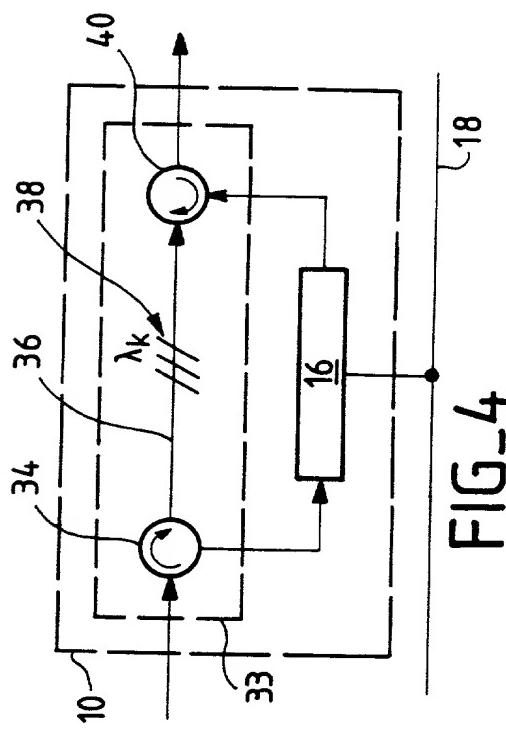
supervisory unit receives information from said regenerator unit and a portion of the regenerated signal delivered by said regenerator unit.

14. A system as claimed in claim 1 further including a plurality of spaced optical amplifiers and a plurality of spaced optical regenerators, wherein the spacing of said optical regenerators is a multiple of the spacing of said optical amplifiers.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

- A multichannel wavelength-division multiplex fiber optic transmission system includes an optical transmitter and an optical receiver connected by an optical line including at least one optical fiber and at least one set of channel regenerators.
- 5 Successive regenerators regenerate respective groups of channels forming a subset of the set of channels.

**FIG_3****FIG_2**



French Language Declaration

Declaration and Power of Attorney for Patent Application

Déclaration et Pouvoirs pour Demande de Brevet

French Language Declaration

En tant que l'inventeur nommé ci-après, je déclare par le présent acte que:

Mon domicile, mon adresse postale et ma nationalité sont ceux figurant ci-dessous à côté de mon nom.

Je crois être le premier inventeur original et unique (si un seul nom est mentionné ci-dessous), ou l'un des premiers co-inventeurs originaux (si plusieurs noms sont mentionnés ci-dessous) de l'objet revendiqué, pour lequel une demande de brevet a été déposée concernant l'invention de la description identifiée par le numéro de référence

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention in the specification identified by Docket No.

102078/LA/SND

Je déclare par le présent acte avoir passé en revue et compris le contenu de la description ci-dessus, revendications comprises.

Je reconnais devoir divulguer toute information pertinente à la brevetabilité, comme défini dans le Titre 37, § 1.56 du Code fédéral des réglementations.

Je revendique par le présent acte avoir la priorité étrangère, en vertu du Titre 35, § 119(a)-(d) ou § 365(b) du Code des Etats-Unis, sur toute demande étrangère de brevet ou certificat d'inventeur ou, en vertu du Titre 35, § 365(a) du même Code, sur toute demande internationale PCT désignant au moins un pays autre que les Etats-Unis et figurant ci-dessous et, j'ai aussi indiqué ci-dessous toute demande étrangère de brevet, tout certificat d'inventeur ou toute demande internationale PCT ayant une date de dépôt précédant celle de la demande à propos de laquelle une priorité est revendiquée.

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority under Title 35, United States Code, § 119(a)-(d) or § 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or § 365(a) of any PCT International application which designated at least one country other than the United States, listed below, and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or PCT International application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Prior foreign application(s) for which priority is claimed

Demande(s) de brevet étrangère(s) antérieure(s) dont la priorité est revendiquée

(Number) (Numéro)	(Country) (Pays)	(Day/Month/Year Filed) (Jour/Mois/Année de dépôt)
99 02 126	FRANCE	19 FEBRUARY 1999

Prior foreign applications for which priority is not claimed

Demande(s) de brevet étrangères antérieure(s) dont la priorité n'est pas revendiquée

(Number) (Numéro)	(Country) (Pays)	(Day/Month/Year Filed) (Jour/Mois/Année de dépôt)

French Language Declaration

Je revendique par le présent acte tout bénéfice, en vertu du Titre 35, § 119(e) du Code des Etats-Unis, de toute demande de brevet provisoire effectuée aux Etats-Unis et figurant ci-dessous.

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, § 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

(Application No.)
(No de demande)

(Filing Date)
(Date de dépôt)

Je revendique par le présent acte tout bénéfice, en vertu du Titre 35, § 120 du Code des Etats-Unis, de toute demande de brevet effectuée aux Etats-Unis, ou en vertu du Titre 35, § 365(c) du même Code, de toute demande internationale PCT désignant les Etats-Unis et figurant ci-dessous et, dans la mesure où l'objet de chacune des revendications de cette demande de brevet n'est pas divulgué dans la demande antérieure américaine ou internationale PCT, en vertu des dispositions du premier paragraphe du Titre 35, § 112 du Code des Etats-Unis, je reconnais devoir divulguer toute information pertinente à la brevetabilité, comme défini dans le Titre 37, § 1.56 du Code fédéral des réglementations, dont j'ai pu disposer entre la date de dépôt de la demande antérieure et la date de dépôt de la demande nationale ou internationale PCT de la présente demande.

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, § 120 of any United States application(s), or § 365(c) of any PCT International application designating the United States, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT International filing date of this application.

(Application No.)
(N° de demande)

(Filing Date)
(Date de dépôt)

(Status)(patented, pending, abandoned)
(Statut)(breveté, en cours d'examen, abandonné)

Je déclare par le présent acte que toute déclaration ci-incluse est, à ma connaissance, véridique et que toute déclaration formulée à partir de renseignements ou de suppositions est tenue pour véridique; et de plus, que toutes ces déclarations ont été formulées en sachant que toute fausse déclaration volontaire ou son équivalent est passible d'une amende ou d'une incarcération, ou des deux, en vertu de la Section 1001 du Titre 18 du Code des Etats-Unis, et que de telles déclarations volontairement fausses risquent de compromettre la validité de la demande de brevet ou du brevet délivré à partir de celle-ci.

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

French Language Declaration

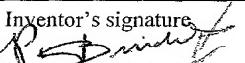
POUVOIRS: En tant que l'inventeur cité, je désigne par la présente l'(les) avocat(s) et/ou agent(s) suivant(s) pour qu'ils poursuive(nt) la procédure de cette demande de brevet et traite(nt) toute affaire s'y rapportant avec l'Office des brevets et des marques: (mentionner le nom et le numéro d'enregistrement).

John H. Mion, Reg. No. 18,879; Thomas J. Macpeak, Reg. No. 19,292; Robert J. Seas, Jr., Reg. No. 21,092; Darryl Mexic, Reg. No. 23,063; Robert V. Sloan, Reg. No. 22,775; Peter D. Olexy, Reg. No. 24,513; J. Frank Osha, Reg. No. 24,625; Waddell A. Biggart, Reg. No. 24,861; Louis Gubinsky, Reg. No. 24,835; Neil B. Siegel, Reg. No. 25,200; David J. Cushing, Reg. No. 28,703; John R. Inge, Reg. No. 26,916; Joseph J. Ruch, Jr., Reg. No. 26,577; Sheldon I. Landsman, Reg. No. 25,430; Richard C. Turner, Reg. No. 29,710; Howard L. Bernstein, Reg. No. 25,665; Alan J. Kasper, Reg. No. 25,426; Kenneth J. Burchfiel, Reg. No. 31,333; Gordon Kit, Reg. No. 30,764; Susan J. Mack, Reg. No. 30,951; Frank L. Bernstein, Reg. No. 31,484; Mark Boland, Reg. No. 32,197; William H. Mandir, Reg. No. 32,156; Scott M. Daniels, Reg. No. 32,562; Brian W. Hannon, Reg. No. 32,778; Abraham J. Rosner, Reg. No. 33,276; Bruce E. Kramer, Reg. No. 33,725; Paul F. Neils, Reg. No. 33,102; and Brett S. Sylvester, Reg. No. 32,765; and Robert M. Masters, Reg. No. 35,603.

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith: (list name and registration number)

Adresser toute correspondance à:

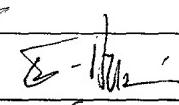
Send Correspondence to:
SUGHRUE, MION, ZINN, MACPEAK & SEAS, PLLC
2100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20037-3213

Nom complet de l'unique ou premier inventeur	Full name of sole or first inventor (First Middle Last) Patrick BRINDEL	
Signature de l'inventeur	Date	Inventor's signature  Date <i>le 28/12/99</i>
Domicile	Residence LONGPONT S/ORGE, FRANCE	
Nationalité	Citizenship French	
Adresse postale	Post Office Address 16, rue du Paradis 91310 LONGPONT S/ORGE, FRANCE	
Nom complet du second co-inventeur, le cas échéant	Full name of second joint inventor, if any (First Middle Last) Bruno DANY	
Signature du second inventeur	Date	Second inventor's signature  Date <i>29/12/99</i>
Domicile	Residence PARIS, FRANCE	
Nationalité	Citizenship French	
Adresse postale	Post Office Address 38, rue Daguerre 75014 PARIS, FRANCE	

(Fournir les mêmes renseignements et la signature de tout co-inventeur supplémentaire.)

(Supply similar information and signature for third and subsequent joint inventors.)

French Language Declaration

Nom complet du troisième co-inventeur, le cas échéant		Full name of third joint inventor, if any (First Middle Last) Emmanuel DESURVIRE	
Signature du troisième l'inventeur	Date	Third inventor's signature	 Date 23 12 99
Domicile	Residence BRUYERES LE CHATEL, FRANCE		
Nationalité	Citizenship French		
Adresse postale	Post Office Address 32, rue de la Butte au Prieur 91680 BRUYERES LE CHATEL, FRANCE		
Nom complet du quatrième co-inventeur, le cas échéant		Full name of fourth joint inventor, if any (First Middle Last)	
Signature du quatrième l'inventeur	Date	Fourth inventor's signature	Date
Domicile	Residence		
Nationalité	Citizenship		
Adresse postale	Post Office Address		
Nom complet du cinquième co-inventeur, le cas échéant		Full name of fifth joint inventor, if any (First Middle Last)	
Signature du cinquième l'inventeur	Date	Fifth inventor's signature	Date
Domicile	Residence		
Nationalité	Citizenship		
Adresse postale	Post Office Address		
Nom complet du sixième co-inventeur, le cas échéant		Full name of sixth joint inventor, if any (First Middle Last)	
Signature du sixième l'inventeur	Date	Sixth inventor's signature	Date
Domicile	Residence		
Nationalité	Citizenship		
Adresse postale	Post Office Address		